

# Shotgun Jackson

## 64 years old

Mr. Jackson, called “Shotgun” by his friends, and his wife were preparing to move from their home in Independence to Montrose, Missouri. His wife returned from church on Sunday morning, October 24, to find a strange sequence of events unfolding.



*Shotgun: I had been talking to a neighbor lady. I did not notice anything wrong, but she started asking questions like, “Are you dizzy; are you weak or anything like that? You appear to be.” She said I was drooling and my speech was slurred. She’d noticed these physical signs.*

*I had been working in the garage while my wife was in church. When my wife pulled up into our yard after church, the neighbor lady came over and told her that she thought I was having a stroke. Both of them were excited. I was not excited because I didn’t know anything was happening to me. My wife called our daughter and said, “Your daddy’s having a stroke; get somebody out here – fast!”*

What was it about Shotgun’s behavior or appearance that made the neighbor think that this was a stroke? Mrs. Jackson shares her insight.

*Mrs. Jackson: I suspected it because when I went over to see him he was drooling out of the left side of his mouth and that side of his mouth was drawn.*

The ambulance crew helped establish the diagnosis already made by the neighbor and Mrs. Jackson.

*Mrs. Jackson: The ambulance crew asked me all these questions about what kind of medication he was on and one thing and another. Basically, he wasn't on any medication. And they asked, "Are you sure about the time span from the time that this all started?" I said, "It's as close as I can come."*

While Mrs. Jackson, the neighbor and the first responders were placing Mr. Jackson in the ambulance, Shotgun himself seemed undisturbed and a little detached.

*Shotgun: Everybody was excited but I never did get excited.*

*Mrs. Jackson: Well it's a good thing we got excited. They had called in Eagle Life Flight to pick him up. We drove about sixteen miles to meet the helicopter. When I got to the helicopter, they said, "Now, if you are sure about this timeline, this is what we are doing. We are flying him directly to the Stroke Center at Saint Luke's Hospital in Kansas City rather than using a small hospital in between." They did this because of the timeline. The window was closing if they were going to try the new technique to open the blood vessel and clear the clot.*

Shotgun summarized the process.

*Shotgun: I'd say that the Montrose crew, the first responders, realized that our neighbor was probably right and that I was having a stroke. They ascertained from my wife that I didn't have high blood pressure, hadn't had any previous strokes and hadn't been doing any violent physical work. So they pretty*

*well decided it was the head. I think they decided since I was showing all the outward signs of having a stroke.*

Once Shotgun arrived at Saint Luke's Stroke Center, the team performed a CT scan, found the clot and received permission from the family to use the Merci® Retriever for its removal. Shotgun's wife remembers the consenting process.

*Mrs. Jackson: They told us we were a test – part of a test thing that was going on. Many had already been done, and the success rate had been good.*

After the successful clot retrieval with the combination of intra-arterial tPA and the Merci® retrieval device, Shotgun was returned to the hospital ICU. He was moving all his extremities and could talk. The investigation for the source of his clot discovered that Shotgun had a patent foramen ovale (PFO).

*Mrs. Jackson: They did that repair the next day. They went in and put the little umbrella up through his heart and closed the hole.*

After the stroke reversal and closure of the PFO, Shotgun and his wife shared a few thoughts on his experience.

*Shotgun: When the stroke hit me, I didn't notice anything. I didn't notice that my speech was slurred and that I was drooling. I mean, there was no pain, discomfort, dizziness or weakness. I didn't know anything bad was happening to me.*

*Mrs. Jackson: Our experience taught us that time is of the essence; that is one of the biggest things. You don't sit around*

*and wait to see what will happen. You just get on with it – and you yell!*



## **COMMENTS**

The first responders knew that early stroke reversal might help save Shotgun. They utilized the regional referral network and determined that helicopter transfer to Saint Luke's Stroke Center was his best chance. When he had his stroke he was seventy miles from Saint Luke's Stroke Center. Without the helpful neighbor, his concerned wife and the helicopter transfer to the Stroke Center, the stroke reversal would not have occurred successfully.

